



How to Deal With Difficult Relatives



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful





Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,

We pray that this message reaches you
in good health and imaan.

On behalf of our AMAU Academy team, we would like
to present to you these compiled notes that we have
prepared to make your journey with us a lot easier.

Our notes are compiled by the AMAU Admin team
and have not been comprehensively checked
by a teacher.

If you find any errors or corrections that need
to be made, kindly inform us via our email
helpdesk@amauacademy.com

May Allah make our paths toward seeking
beneficial knowledge easy and kindle our hearts
with sincerity and gratefulness
towards Him.

Jazakumullahu Khayran



amauofficial

Website **www.amauacademy.com**

Watch Videos

Table of Contents

06 *Chapter One*

**Being Patient With
the Trials of This World**

09 *Chapter Two*

**Being Good to the One
Who Treats You Badly**

14 *Chapter Three*

The Importance of Keeping Ties

17 *Chapter Four*

**How Do We Keep Ties
With Our Relatives?**

21 *Chapter Five*

**Challenges Faced and
How to Overcome Them**

Glossary



جل جلاله | Jalla Jalāluhu
Allah the Most Exalted



صلى الله عليه وسلم | Sallāllāhu Alayhi Wa Sallam
Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him

Being Patient With the Trials of This World

Chapter One

Every Muslim trying to uphold kinship ties with difficult relatives should understand that this life was created as a test.

Allah ﷻ said in His Book:

1

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

He is the One Who created death and life in order to test which of you is best in deeds.

Surah al-Anbiya 35

A — An Advice

Understand that the trials and calamities that befall you are your opportunities to get closer to Allah. Therefore, do not see them as punishments that make you suffer.

Even the minor punishments that Allah bestows upon us have a purpose behind them. He ﷻ tells us:

2

وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَذْنَىٰ دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

We will certainly make them taste some of the minor torment 'in this life before the major torment 'of the Hereafter', so perhaps they will return 'to the Right Path'.

Surah as-Sajdah 21

Therefore, if you find yourself being tested in maintaining ties with your relatives, consider it an opportunity to draw closer to Allah.

Allah ﷻ told us that people can be a source of tests for us. He said:

3

وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً أَتَصْبِرُونَ ۚ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا

We have made some of you a trial for others. Will you 'not then' be patient? And your Lord is All-Seeing.

Surah al-Furqan 20

In situations where people become a trial for us, Allah ﷻ instructs us to practise patience and remain grateful to Him.

B — What Does It Mean to Have Sabr?

Having Sabr encompasses three things:

● Being patient in obedience to Allah ﷻ

This implies persisting in doing what is right, even when it becomes challenging.

For instance, remaining kind to people and upholding family bonds, despite their actions or attitudes making it difficult to do so.

● Being patient in keeping away from sins

This means keeping away from everything that is Haraam, including things that the Nafs desires.

For instance, a person may feel like shouting, insulting, ridiculing or cursing back a relative who wronged him.

But he stops his Nafs from doing any such action because he is scared of Allah and fears standing before Him ﷻ with those bad deeds on Yawm al-Qiyaamah.

● Being patient in the face of the painful aspects of Qadar

Sometimes Allah ﷻ Decrees matters that may be difficult to bear. In such times, we should never be angry with Allah or ask things like “Why me?”, and so on.

Instead, we should remain patient and leverage such situations to get closer to Allah ﷻ.

We should remember that Jannah is not cheap. One can only attain it through dedication, struggle and hard work.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

4

أَلَا إِنَّ سِلْعَةَ اللَّهِ غَالِيَةً أَلَا إِنَّ سِلْعَةَ اللَّهِ الْجَنَّةُ

Verily, the merchandise of Allah is expensive, surely the merchandise of Allah is Paradise.

Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2450

Therefore, if you are faced with a challenge, you should always accept it as an opportunity to draw nearer to Allah.

All of the above points can be understood by pondering over this simple yet powerful question of Allah:

5

أَتَصْبِرُونَ؟

Will you 'not then' be patient?

Surah al-Furqan 20

Here, Allah asks if we are going to show Sabr by continuing to:

- 1 Do good deeds
- 2 Keep away from all that is Haraam
- 3 Be pleased with the Qadar of Allah

We should note that if a person treats us badly, the default reaction of a Muslim should be to ignore and turn away from him.

But what if that person turns out to be a relative or a close family member, concerning whom Allah has commanded us to maintain kinship ties? We will delve into this topic in the next chapter.

Being Good to the One Who Treats You Badly

Chapter Two

The following Aayaat tell us the best way to deal with people who mistreat us:

Allah ﷻ says:

1

وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better. Then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.

وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

But none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient - and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion (of happiness in the Hereafter and of a high moral character) in this world.

وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And if an evil whisper from Shaitân tries to turn you away (O Muhammad ﷺ) (from doing good), then seek refuge in Allâh. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.

Surah Fussilat 34 - 36

Imagine if someone behaves toward you in an evil way. By doing this, he has done something which is unacceptable and goes against the Command of Allah.

Whenever a relative or a close family member mistreats you, do not mistreat them in return.

Now comes your turn. Would you respond to his evil action with an equally evil reaction?

In the above Aayaat, Allah tells us that good deeds and bad deeds are not equal in His sight.

Thus, He Commands us to: ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

ادْفَعْ means to push something back

So, if someone harms you, does not give you your rights, or insults you, do not go down to his level by responding to him in a like manner, or taking revenge upon him.

You should try to have حِلْم (forbearance). It is a quality that Allah loves.

WHENEVER A RELATIVE OR A CLOSE FAMILY MEMBER MISTREATS YOU, DO NOT MISTREAT THEM IN RETURN.

Continue fulfilling the rights and obligations they have upon you, and do whatever else you can for them, following the Mustahabb actions prescribed for maintaining kinship ties.

Know that responding to evil with what is best demands a great deal of sincerity.

To understand this better, ponder over the meaning of the Aayah:

2

إِنَّمَا نَطْعُمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

We feed you seeking Allâh’s Countenance only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you.

Surah al-Insaan 9

Many times, we fail to respond well to relatives who treat us badly because deep down we crave recognition, acknowledgement or decent behaviour from them in return.

If we focused on doing it only for Allah, we would always respond to them in a better way, thereby reflecting a higher standard of morality and character.

This results from knowing that we are doing it for Allah, and ultimately, it would lead us to do it with perfection. He ﷺ said in the Qur’an:

3

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ

Surely Allah is with those who have Taqwa and who have Ihsaan.

Surah an-Nahl 128

The people of Ihsaan are those who go beyond the minimum requirements expected of them. They exceed people’s expectations. They are al-Muhsinoon.

And al-Muhsinoon are as-Saabiqoon - the people who race ahead of others in doing good deeds. They do more than what their relatives do for them.

1 What Happens When You Respond to Evil With Good?

Allah ﷻ informs us that if we consistently behave well towards relatives who mistreat us and strive for Ihsaan in the way we treat them, they will eventually become like close friends to us.

It is a promise from Allah.

This principle applies not just to relatives but to anyone who mistreats you or behaves poorly towards you.

Your good behaviour towards them will benefit you in two ways:

● You will get Tawfeeq from Allah

In other words, Allah ﷻ will bless you with success.

● Their hearts will soften towards you

Seeing how they fell short in giving you your rights while you continued to be good towards them will cause them to change.

2 Nobody Can Achieve This Level Except People of Sabr

Being good to someone who behaves badly towards you and treating them with Ihsaan is a very challenging thing to do.

It requires Sabr and sincerity. A person should do it with the intention of getting reward from Allah.

Another factor needed to do this is consistency. A lot of people who are tested with difficult relatives often say, “I’ve tried, but it doesn’t work.”

The Prophet ﷺ said:

4

The most beloved deed to Allah is the most regular and constant even if it were little.

Sahih al-Bukhari 6464

One should consistently treat his relatives well, maintaining regularity by checking up on them year after year, month after month, and so on.

Remember, your reward will be with Allah ﷻ - regardless of whether that person changes or not.

3 Nobody Can Achieve It Except Those Who Have Been Given a Great Portion

By “ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ”, Allah means someone who has been given an abundance of goodness.

This indicates that to become a person who responds to evil with good, we need Allah’s help. So, we should constantly ask Allah for this great portion.

Sufyaan ibn ‘Uyaynah said that the scholars of the past used to write letters to one another. Among the things they wrote to each other was:

5

من أصلح ما بينه وبين الله أصلح الله ما بينه وبين الناس

Whoever rectifies what is between him and Allah, Allah will rectify whatever is between him and the people.

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah

Correcting one’s relationship with Allah brings about Tawfeeq, gives you the ability to be patient and seek reward from Him ﷻ.

4 If the Shaytaan Makes You Slip...

There may be situations where we intend to be good to our relatives, respond to them with what is better, and be patient with them.

However, due to our sins, lack of seeking Allah’s protection, or falling into Shaytaan’s traps, we may sometimes deviate from the high standard we aim to maintain.

This can result in losing our patience and behaving poorly in relationships, with relatives, or in other aspects of life.

In such situations, it is vital to seek Allah's refuge by saying:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

A'oodhu Billaahi min ash-Shaytaan ir-Rajeem

I seek refuge in Allah from the outcast Shaytaan.

After realising that Shaytaan has led us astray, we should say these words and continue to strive for that level of perfection and patience where we can be good to people despite the harm they do to us.

We should exercise patience and refrain from harming them through slander, backbiting, and other malicious acts.

Ultimately, we should view it as a challenge and endeavour to make the most out of it by striving to draw closer to Allah.

The Importance of Keeping Ties

Chapter Three

Let us discuss the concept of “صلة الرحم” (Silatul Rahim).

The word "الرحم" originally means the womb. However, the term is also used to refer to people who are related to you by ties of blood.

Side benefit: Although Silatul Rahim does not include ties of marriage, it is still emphasised to keep ties with one’s in-laws as it comes under supporting one’s spouse for Silatul Rahim.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur’an:

- 1

وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ

[...] and those who maintain whatever 'ties' Allah has ordered to be maintained [...]

Surah ar-Ra'd 21

Allah ﷻ has promised the people who uphold kinship ties with “عُقْبَى الدَّارِ” - the abode of Paradise.

He ﷻ also says:

- 2

وَالَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ

And those who break the Covenant of Allâh, after its establishment, and sever that which Allâh has commanded to be joined (i.e. they sever the bond of kinship and are not good to their relatives), and work mischief in the land, on them is the curse, and for them is the evil home (i.e. Hell).

Surah ar-Ra'd 25

Hence, we understand that maintaining ties with relatives is a cause for people to enter Jannah, whereas breaking the Covenant of Allah, causing corruption, and severing kinship ties can lead people to be cast into the Hellfire.

Notice how causing corruption and cutting kinship ties are again mentioned together in the following Aayah:

- 3

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ

Now if you turn away, perhaps you would then spread corruption throughout the land and sever your 'ties of' kinship!

Surah Muhammad 22

Also, the Prophet ﷺ said:

- 4

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ قَاطِعٌ

The person who severs the bond of kinship will not enter Paradise.

Sahih al-Bukhari 5984

This means that they will not enter Jannah directly and without punishment, unlike the believers.

Thus, we need to realise that when we behave poorly towards someone who mistreats us, we are only bringing problems upon ourselves.

We end up destroying our Dunya by feeling miserable because of the dispute, and the Akhirah by responding evilly or cutting off ties, ultimately becoming one of those who will not enter Jannah.

Our focus should be on pleasing Allah and attaining Jannah. We should never let anyone deter us from our goal, especially someone who claims to be our enemy.

Look at what Allah ﷻ said to kinship ties in the following hadith narrated by Aby Hurayrah رضى الله عنه:

5

أَلَا تَرْضَيْنَ أَنْ أَصِلَ مَنْ وَصَلَكَ، وَأَقْطَعَ مَنْ قَطَعَكَ؟

Are you not content that I should maintain connections with the one who maintains connection with you and I should cut off the one who cuts you off?

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 50 | Grade: Sahih (Al-Albani)

From this hadith, we learn that Allah ﷻ has promised to maintain connections with those who uphold ties with their relatives, while severing ties with those who break their connections with family members.

A

Maintaining Ties With Relatives Who Treat You Badly

Read this hadith that encourages us to uphold ties with people who cut us off:

6

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: أَتَى رَجُلٌ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ لِي قَرَابَةً أَصْلُهُمْ وَيَقْطَعُونِ، وَأُحْسِنُ إِلَيْهِمْ وَيُسِيئُونَ إِلَيَّ، وَيَجْهَلُونَ عَلَيَّ وَأَحْلُمُ عَنْهُمْ، قَالَ: لَئِنْ كَانَ كَمَا تَقُولُ كَأَمَّا تُسَفُّهُمْ الْمَلَّ، وَلَا يَزَالُ مَعَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ ظَهِيرٌ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا دُمْتَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

Abu Hurayra said, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'Messenger of Allah! I have relatives with whom I maintain ties while they cut me off. I am good to them while they are bad to me. They behave foolishly towards me while I am forbearing towards them.'

The Prophet said, 'If things are as you said, it is as if you were putting hot ashes on them and you will not lack a supporter against them from Allah as long as you continue to do that.'"

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 52 | Grade: Sahih (Al-Albani)

Notice that the Prophet ﷺ did not allow the man to stop trying to maintain ties with his relatives just because they were cutting him off. Rather, he encouraged him to continue what he was doing.

The Prophet ﷺ also told us what a true maintainer of kinship ties is like:

7

لَيْسَ الْوَاصِلُ بِالْمُكَافِي، وَلَكِنَّ الْوَاصِلَ الَّذِي إِذَا قُطِعَتْ رَحِمُهُ وَصَلَهَا.

The one who maintains ties of kinship is not the one who reciprocates. The one who maintains ties of kinship is the one who, when his relatives cut him off, maintains ties of kinship.

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 68 | Grade: Sahih (Al-Albani)

How Do We Keep Ties With Our Relatives?

Chapter Four

An important question worth addressing is: What does it mean to keep ties with relatives?

First of all, we must understand that relatives are of different levels.

This can be understood from the Aayah where Allah ﷻ said:

1

وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ

But some relatives are more entitled to inheritance in the Book of Allah.

Surah al-Anfal 75

Although this Aayah talks about inheritance, its principle can apply to other aspects.

Hence, some relatives are closer to us than others, and each of them gets treatment according to their expectations and cultural norms.

For this reason, some of the people of Knowledge said, "Whatever the people of a community consider as maintaining ties, then that should be regarded as maintaining ties."

Similarly, they said, "And whatever the people consider as cutting off, then that must be regarded as severing ties."

We must also understand that expectations depend on the closeness or distance of a particular relation. For instance, the expectations regarding how you are supposed to treat your second cousin are clearly different from how you are expected to treat your siblings or your mother.

Each relative has an expectation attached to him or her. This expectation is set by العرف (societal norms) and habits of people within a community.

These norms and habits vary from culture to culture. However, it is crucial to note that if a cultural norm or practice exceeds the boundaries set by Islam, it should not be accepted.

A

To What Extent Should We Consider a Person's Feelings?

We should consider the feelings of our relatives and ensure they do not feel disconnected from us.

Even if their expectations surpass the standard level known in the community, we can still strive to meet them from the perspective of Ihsaan.

Note that there is no particular action that defines keeping kinship ties. This means that maintaining ties does not necessarily mean visiting relatives once every week, and so on.

Instead, the meaning depends on what they need from us at a particular time and what the societal expectations are in a given era or period.

Some of the people of Knowledge said, “Maintaining kinship ties occurs through every action that you undertake for a relative, which is considered as keeping ties with your relatives and not cutting off from them. This can manifest through various means, including financial assistance, offering help or service, or paying a visit.”

Considering societal expectations when maintaining ties with our relatives is important because certain acts, such as financial assistance, may be expected in the case of close relatives but not so much in the case of distant relatives.

Interestingly, one can adopt different means to maintain relationship ties, such as:

- 1 **Visits**
- 2 **Offering help or service**
- 3 **Financial assistance, and so on.**

Furthermore, applying this approach can be helpful when dealing with difficult relatives. For example, if visiting a particular relative consistently leads to arguments, heated debates, or raised voices, one may consider alternative means to maintain kinship ties instead of completely stopping visits.

For instance, reducing the frequency of visits and providing financial assistance if the relative is in need could be a viable alternative.

The key point: There are lots of ways to maintain kinship ties.

Even in cases where relatives live far away from us, we can message them, get on video calls with them, and do things to make them feel we care for them.

Adopting different ways of maintaining kinship ties helps alleviate pressure in relationships and eliminate negative feelings.

Challenges Faced and How to Overcome Them

Chapter Five

There are several challenges people face when dealing with difficult relatives. Some of them are discussed below:

A Apathetic Relatives:

Many people find that their relatives refuse to engage with them. When they visit them, they do not give them any attention. When they message them, they seem to ignore them, and so on.

To deal with relatives like this, take the following approach:

- Continue maintaining ties with them
- Consider societal expectations and treat them according to a good standard. This will help you know how to deal with them even if they do not communicate their feelings and thoughts with you
- Try to understand what they need and how you can benefit them
- Most importantly, remind yourself you are doing it only for Allah's sake

B Relatives Who Seek to Harm You

Some people have relatives who attempt to harm them in various ways. These individuals may engage in backbiting, undermine you, and employ various tactics to inflict harm.

In such cases, the key is to minimise the harm they cause without severing ties with them. To achieve this, it's essential to first identify the source of the harm.

For instance, if you realise that they cause more harm when visiting your house, you can opt to visit them in their place. Alternatively, if the harm is more significant when you visit with your family, you might consider visiting them alone, and so forth.

Remember that it depends from situation to situation.

In cases of less serious harm such as backbiting, remain patient

C Relatives Who Discourage You From Keeping Ties With Them

People also have relatives who shun them by saying things like:

- “We don’t want you to come”
- “Why are you here again?”
- “How many times have I told you to get out?”
- “I don’t want to talk to you again”

The key here is to refrain from stooping to their level and responding in a similar manner. Instead, choose to respond with kind words, expressing your concern and willingness to be there for them.

Then, look for other ways to maintain ties with them without necessarily visiting them.

Make du'aa for them. Consider involving another relative as a mediator to help reconcile and resolve issues between the two of you.

D Relatives Who Harm Your Family Members

Some relatives can cause problems for your close family members, such as your children or your spouse.

In these cases, you first have to understand who is being harmed.

If it is your spouse, then she does not have to necessarily keep ties with them since they come under in-laws and therefore do not have kinship ties with her. So, you can reduce interactions between those relatives and your spouse, while you continue to maintain relations with them.

If it is your children, they will be obliged to keep ties with them. Thus, you will need to minimise the harm. If it is bearable, you can put up with it for Allah's sake. You can also compartmentalise such relationships.

*** CONCLUSION**

At the end of the day, it's important to remind yourself that just as you are striving to maintain ties with people, others may also be making efforts to stay connected with you. Therefore, treat everyone in the same way you wish to be treated.

Ensure that every effort you exert is for the sake of Allah ﷻ. Your main goal should be to mend your relationship with Allah.

If you find that there is no way you can fix your relationship with a particular relative, strive to fix your relationship with Allah ﷻ.

You will see that Allah ﷻ will fix things between you and your relative.

Finally, do not neglect the importance of a mediator. In many cases, a third party can serve as a neutralising factor, calming things down and alleviating tension in the relationship between two people.

A good example of this can be the relationship between your mother and your wife. In cases of conflict, you can act as a mediator and resolve issues between them by making them help you give each one her rights.



To ensure your progress,
we recommend that you take
this self evaluation quiz based
on the notes and video
series that you have
just completed.

Attempt Quiz

If you find the course beneficial,
then here's your opportunity to
spread the khair by gifting an
AMAU Academy subscription
to one of your friends
or family.

Buy Gift Card





www.amauacademy.com